

BRANSON FORESTRY

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Forest Management Plan
Prepared for
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36 Hinkle Road
Washington, CT

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The following is a Forest Management Plan for property totaling 36.673 acres located at 36 Hinkle Road, Washington, CT. The property is subject to two Conservation Restrictions held by Steep Rock Association, Inc. One was executed in 1998 and covers 15.0 acres and the other was executed in 2007 and covers 21.673 acres.

This plan was prepared pursuant to Paragraph 3.3 of the 2007 Conservation Restriction, which describes Grantor's Reserved Rights to: “..(1) cut and remove dead or diseased trees, shrubs, and plants; (2) cut firebreaks; (3) conduct selective cutting or clearing of vegetation and mowing for habitat enhancement and protection, unpaved trail and road maintenance, tick control, the preservation of vistas, or to otherwise preserve the present condition of the Protected Property; (4) plant and otherwise grow or clear trees and other vegetation, provided that: (a) all such work is performed pursuant to a forestry management plan prepared by a Connecticut-certified forester, (b) such forestry management plan is updated every ten (10) years, and (c) such forestry management plan is approved in advance by Grantee...”, and Paragraph 4 of the 1998 Conservation Restriction which describes Grantor's Reserved Right to “...engage in or invite others to engage in all uses of the Property that are not expressly prohibited herein and are not inconsistent with the purpose of this Restriction.”

This plan is intended to complement a landscape design plan by LaGuardia Design Landscape Architecture P.C., who has designed all plantings within the restricted areas using principles of naturalistic landscaping favoring native species that are beneficial to wildlife, especially native songbirds and pollinators.

The areas recommended for forest management total 6.0 acres, shown on the attached map, located based on accessibility from the proposed driveway, suitability of the terrain and soils for management activities, and minimization of disturbance to the more sensitive and/or unique natural features within the restriction areas, such as the white oak forest in Stand 1, the vernal pool, and the perennial stream corridor.

Recommendations focus on protecting and preserving wolf trees, which provide specialized habitat, controlling invasive species, which are a threat to native habitat, and removing diseased trees, such as white ash affected by emerald ash borer and hemlock affected by hemlock woolly adelgid.

All forest thinning and invasive species control should be carried out according to CT DEEP's Best Management Practices (BMP's) for protecting soil, use low impact (minimal ground pressure) equipment whenever possible, and be conducted during periods of appropriate weather and soil conditions to minimize rutting, compaction, erosion and sedimentation.

In the list of recommendations below, thinning around wolf trees refers to removing all competing trees within the drip line of the specimen tree, as well as removing adjacent canopy trees to release the live crown from competition on all sides. This is intended to preserve the lower live branches, allow the crown to expand, and enhance longevity by generally increasing health and vigor. Soil compaction around the root systems of the wolf trees should be kept to a minimum, and stumps should be left in place or ground just below grade, rather than being dug out or grubbed. Forestry mowing refers to heavy mowing of small trees and shrubs with skid steer or excavator mounted mulching or flail mowing equipment.

Recommendations

Stand 1 Forest Management Area: 1.3 acres

- 1) Thin around wolf trees.
- 2) Plant native species (e.g. Pennsylvania sedge, shadblow, spicebush, etc.) in disturbed areas.
- 3) Plant native species along the field edges to create "soft edge" or ecotone between fields and forest.
- 4) Five year maintenance plan for 25' buffers along each side of proposed driveway: mow accessible areas once or twice a year outside of the nesting season, hand trim (with string trimmer or brush blade) and/or hand pull undesirable woody vegetation around native shrub plantings.

Stand 2 Forest Management Area: 1.8 acres

- 1) Remove ash and other diseased or poorly formed trees to release cherry, red oak, and sugar maple.
- 2) Remove Japanese barberry & winged euonymus by grubbing with mini excavator with thumb.
- 3) Preserve native understory (e.g. spicebush) where feasible.
- 4) Cut all bittersweet and grape vines at ground level.
- 5) Follow up periodically with forestry mowing or targeted foliar chemical spray of vines and invasive species.
- 6) Five year maintenance plan for 25' buffers along each side of proposed driveway: mow accessible areas once or twice a year outside of the nesting season, hand trim (with string trimmer or brush blade) and/or hand pull undesirable woody vegetation around native shrub plantings.

Stand 3 Forest Management Area: 1.3 Acres

- 1) Thin around wolf trees.
- 2) Forestry mow *rubus* in buffers along driveway.
- 3) Plant native species (e.g. Pennsylvania sedge, shadblow, spicebush, etc.) in disturbed areas.
- 4) Five year maintenance plan for 25' buffers along each side of proposed driveway: mow accessible areas once or twice a year outside of the nesting season, hand trim (with string trimmer or brush blade) and/or hand pull undesirable woody vegetation around native shrub plantings.

Stand 4 Forest Management Area: 1.6 acres

- 1) Thin around wolf trees.
- 2) Forestry mow or conventionally mow understory to prevent establishment of invasive shrubs in formerly grazed areas.
- 3) Plant native species (e.g. Pennsylvania sedge, shadblow, spicebush, etc.) in disturbed areas.
- 4) Plant native species along the field edges to create “soft edge” or ecotone between fields and forest.
- 4) Five year maintenance plan for 25' buffers along each side of proposed driveway: mow accessible areas once or twice a year outside of the nesting season, hand trim (with string trimmer or brush blade) and/or hand pull undesirable woody vegetation around native shrub plantings.

Field Breaks / Hedge Rows

- 1) Reclaim the field edges along the stone walls that separate the fields, which are lined with mature trees and dense strips of shrubs, mostly invasive species such as multiflora rose and Japanese barberry.
- 2) Preserve oak wolf trees and better formed specimens of sugar maple, shagbark hickory, black cherry and other desirable species.
- 3) Remove dead and dying ash, black cherry with black knot fungus, and other diseased and / or defective trees.
- 4) Clear invasive species with handheld brush blade to reveal stone walls.
- 5) Maintain with conventional mowing and trimming to exclude invasive species and encourage native grasses and wildflowers.

